



County Conservation News

Earth Day Edition!

April 2011

Earth Day is Friday April 22, 2011

Issue 8

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www.epa.gov/pick5/

www.epa.gov/kids/

www.earth911.org

www.earthday.org/

www.youtube.com/watch?v=GLgh9h2ePYw

<http://www.fox.com/glee/videos/873611894001/glee-earth-day-tips?sortby=date>

Contact Us

GreenTeam@co.lewis-clark.mt.us

Calling for Volunteers!

The Lewis and Clark County Green Team in partnership with the Landfill invites you to help celebrate **Earth Day** by helping to pick up litter along the public roadway from Fox Ridge Golf Course to the County Landfill on Deal Lane.

Date: Thursday, April 21, 2011

Time: 5:30

**Starting Location: 4075 Deal Lane,
Landfill Shop**

All volunteers will be invited to proceed to the Fox Ridge Golf course dining room and be rewarded with dinner (from the lunch menu, no alcohol included).

Please RSVP to Sherrel Rhys @ 8021.

Be aware, in the event of bad weather the celebration may be postponed.

Please wear appropriate clothing including shoes for walking on uneven ground. Gloves and safety vests will be provided.

Caught Green Handed

Many of you have already been "caught" green handed. On March 1, 2011, the Green Team began handing out coupons to any County employee for having green work practices. Some of the activities coupons have been handed out for include working with lights off in a sunny office, working with only necessary lights on, using reusable water bottles and/or coffee cups, biking to work, and duplex printing. The program runs quarterly so on June 1st turn any coupons you have earned into a green team member so you can be entered into the prize drawing for a reusable stainless steel travel coffee mug.



The Energy Conservation Challenge issued by the Green Team is just over 50% complete. The goal is to decrease overall energy use by 10%. Due to lag time in receiving energy bills our current update is for the month of January only. As a reminder, bills are compared to the average energy use over the same month for the previous two years.

January update:

City-County decreased use 16.02% (+\$1,552.80)

Cooney Home decreased use 12.50% (+\$1,052.31)

Health Center decreased use 7.75% (+\$97.12)

Courthouse/LEC increased use 5.05% (-\$995.44)

Fairgrounds increased use 3.55% (-\$307.87)

Public Works increased use 8.51% (-\$467.48)

The cumulative total for all county buildings in January resulted in:

DECREASED USE BY 4.63% (+\$871.89)

KEEP IT UP!!

Local Earth Day Events

Environmental Discovery Day

North Lawn of the Capitol Building
Thursday April 28, 2011
9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

For more information:

http://www.epa.gov/region8/earthday/MontanaDEQ_EnvironmentalDiscoveryDay2011.pdf



May is Bike to Work Month!

Helena's Bike/Walk to Work Challenge May 1 – 31, 2011

The Green Team is going to sponsor a County-wide team for the Bike to Work Challenge. Team membership is open to anyone who works for the County in any capacity. To sign up or if you have any questions, contact our Team Captain Susan Bawden via email or at 8028.

How it works:

- **Join the team!!!!**
- Encourage / challenge other friends and co-workers to compete.
- Log your trips and miles throughout the month of May.
- Bicycle or walk at least five times and be eligible to win great prizes (That's only 1 day a week!).
- Teams with highest percentage of trips and most commuted miles will be awarded certificates.
- Businesses with highest percentage of participants will be recognized.

Each team member will log their daily trips and miles to and from work on the team's log sheet. Please only count the miles commuting to work. Recreational biking and walking or other commuting miles do not count. The Team captain will turn in a weekly log. All team participants will be e-mailed weekly standings. At the end of the month, certificates will be awarded based on the teams riding the most miles, and the highest percent of trips made. Business with the highest percentage of participants will be recognized.

What counts as a bike commute?

- Biking (non-motorized) or walking both ways to work.
- Biking or walking one way to work and the other way by another mode.
- Biking or walking part way to work by pairing with transit, driving, or any other mode.
- If you are not biking or walking all of the way to work, count only the mileage of the cycling or walking part of your commute as your commuting distance.

Just commute 5 days and you will be eligible to win great prizes!

Join the team today!!!!





The History of Earth Day

On April 22, 1970, the first earth day was celebrated. On Friday, April 22, 2011, we will celebrate Earth Day for the 41st time. In 1970 it was an idea whose time had come; but why was that first Earth Day so successful that it spawned not only an entire movement, but national policy and regulations, and a national agency devoted to protecting our environment?

The success of that first Earth Day is rooted in several events during the 1960's. In 1962 Rachel Carson wrote *Silent Spring*, a series of articles first published in serial form by *The New Yorker* magazine, and later published in book form. Carson's writings identified and discussed the problems associated with pesticides and pollution in our environment. In 1964 the first large scale protest against the United States involvement in Vietnam was held. The civil rights movement was growing, and activism was breaking out in college campuses across the country. In 1969 a catastrophic oil spill had occurred in Santa Barbara, CA, and the Cuyahoga River in Ohio literally caught on fire. The impacts of these activities had combined to create a tipping point for environmental activism; all it needed was a champion.

Enter Senator Gaylord Nelson (D) Wisconsin, a former Governor of Wisconsin and an early environmentalist. Upon election in 1962, Senator Nelson spent the next 7 years attempting to bring national attention to environmental issues. In 1963, he convinced then President Kennedy to go on a conservation tour of 5 states and 11 cities; President Kennedy spoke on the need to protect our natural resources. Unfortunately, the press was more interested in foreign policy and the freshly signed limited ban on nuclear testing in the atmosphere, (an agreement between the US and the USSR) than they were in the environment. In 1965 Senator Nelson submitted a bill banning the use of DDT. Nelson did not get any support, or any votes for his bill. Nelson continued to try to find a way to bring environmental issues to the national stage. In 1969, while touring the Santa Barbara oil spill area, it came to him. Why not use the same approach as many Anti-Vietnam war activists were using and have a 'teach-in'. This type of peaceful demonstration had been actively and successfully used across the country to show opposition to the US's involvement in Vietnam and to show support for the civil rights movement.

In September 1969, Senator Nelson, while speaking to a small group of conservationists in Seattle, Washington proposed an environmental teach-in the following spring to promote the increasing concerns of the American public regarding the degrading environment; and to force environmental issues onto the national agenda. The Associated Press picked up the story, broadcasting it across the land. In November 1969, Senator Nelson announced this National Environmental Teach-In would be held on April 22, 1970 a date chosen so as not to interfere with spring break or finals. Senator Nelson decided against having a formally organized event. He wanted a grassroots effort where Americans observed it "anyway they want." When his office could not keep up with the phone calls and letters being received with questions, he created a national office to gather information and direct inquiries, but that office did not directly plan any formal events. In fact, even the name was spontaneous. Senator Nelson continued to refer to the "Environmental Teach-In" and a supporter coined the phrase Earth Day, "because it rhymed with "birthday". Senator Nelson had hoped that he could convince college campuses across the country to participate in the teach-in. He had no idea how popular his idea was, or the huge success it would have. The grassroots efforts of communities across the country produced 'teach-ins' at over 2,000 universities across the country, activities at over 12,000 elementary and high schools, fairs, concerts, festivals, environmental art shows, film festivals, field trips and workshops and the "Human Jam" on New York City's Fifth Avenue, which was closed off for the event. In all, over 20 million people across the country participated in that first Earth Day. The message was heard and that first Earth Day was one of the catalysts for the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency in December 1970 and the passage of the Clean Air Act of 1970, the Clean Water Act of 1972 and the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

41 years ago, 20 million people gathered across America to show their concern for the environment. Earth Day 2011 will find over 1 billion people in 180 countries celebrating Earth Day, and letting their voice be heard. Will yours be one of them?



WASTE REDUCTION INFORMATION

Waste reduction is the highest priority in the solid waste hierarchy. It is better (and much less expensive) to not generate waste in the first place than to have to recycle or dispose of it afterwards. The following are some information and resources available to help you reduce the amount of waste you create.

WHY WASTE REDUCTION IS IMPORTANT

All the products you buy, or at least their packaging or containers, will eventually require disposal. Packaging now accounts for 64 million tons by weight or 33% of all our garbage. The average Montanan discards about 4 1/2 pounds of trash each day. If each person reduced waste by only 1 pound each week, the amount of reduction statewide would total 25,350 tons a year.

Waste reduction is as important as recycling in saving natural resources, energy, and disposal space and costs, and in reducing pollution risks. Careful buying and disposal habits can also stretch the family of business budget.

When you go shopping follow these guidelines:

- **Buy durable products** instead of those that are disposable or cheaply made.
- **Repair/restore used items** before replacing them.
- **Buy items you can re-use.** Re-using margarine tubs to freeze foods or pack lunches, for instance, reduces the need for foil or plastic wrap.
- **Buy items you can recycle locally.**
- **Avoid excess packaging** when choosing product brands. Buy products in bulk. Buy just the amount you need: larger sizes reduce the amount of packaging, but smaller sizes reduce leftover waste.

MORE WASTE REDUCTION TIPS:

Buy only what you need. Avoid impulse buying. Not only will you end up with something you can't use and have to throw away, but it will also be very expensive. One way to avoid this is to make a shopping list of what you need, and then stick to that list.

More Earth Day Events Across Montana

Earth Day Celebration at the Audubon Center in Billings

Join us to help with stewardship projects to create and improve habitat for wildlife at the Center. We'll be planting, weeding, and cleaning up our big backyard in celebration of Earth Day (9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.).

The University of Montana invites the public to participate in annual Earth Week activities April 16-23 on campus and around the community.

Events kick off Saturday, April 16, with Earth Service Day. Service opportunities include Clark Fork River cleanup, Rattlesnake Creek restoration, sorting recyclables on campus and working at UM's PEAS Farm.

For Event Listings go to: <http://www.umt.edu/earthday>.

Montana State University Information: <http://www.montana.edu/gec/schedule.htm>



Check out our website!

Want to know more? The Green Team now has a page on the County website. Follow this link, or go to the County website and click on Green Team!

<http://www.co.lewis-clark.mt.us/departments/admin-finance/green-team.html>

Find out about carpooling in your area, check on the latest news and projects, or check out the links!



The Mission of the Lewis and Clark County Green Team is to Promote sustainability and stewardship of environmental resources in daily government practices to save money and reduce the environmental impacts of county operations.

The Green Team meets the first Wednesday of each month. If you would like to be involved contact any Green Team member or go to the County website and choose the Green Team link. Fill out the comment form and click the contact me button!

The County Conservation News is published electronically each month by the Green Team. You can make suggestions for topics by filling out the comment and suggestion form on the Green Team website.

Before their Time

"What is the use of a house if you haven't got a tolerable planet to put it on?"

—Henry David Thoreau

"To waste, to destroy, our natural resources, to skin and exhaust the land instead of using it so as to increase its usefulness, will result in undermining in the days of our children the very prosperity which we ought by right to hand down to them."

— *Theodore Roosevelt*

"Men and nature must work hand in hand. The throwing out of balance of the resources of nature throws out of balance also the lives of men."

~Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 1935

"Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot,
Nothing is going to get better. It's not."

— Dr. Seuss, from *The Lorax*, 1971